

Your Diet and Hemodialysis

When your kidneys no longer work the way that they should, following a special diet and having dialysis treatments will help keep extra water and waste from building up in your body.

You will be asked to limit foods that are high in

- ❖ sodium (salt and salty foods)
- ❖ potassium (orange juice, bananas)
- ❖ phosphorus (milk, cheese)
- ❖ liquids (hot and cold drinks, water, soup)



Your diet is an important part of your overall care.

- ❖ When your dialysis begins, it will be important for you to eat more high quality protein foods like lean meat, pork, fish, seafood, egg whites, egg substitute and poultry to meet your daily protein needs.
- ❖ Please be sure to ask your dietitian if you have any questions or need help with meal planning, grocery shopping tips, cooking ideas or tips for eating out.
- ❖ Please remember that following a special diet for your kidneys can be enjoyable and healthy for you.

Protein

Now that you have started dialysis, you need to eat a higher protein diet to meet your body's protein needs.

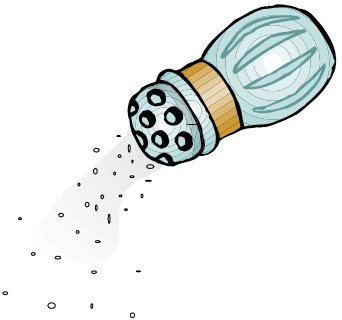


- ❖ Be sure to eat protein-rich foods like lean meat, lean pork, fish, seafood, egg whites, egg substitutes and poultry to meet your daily protein needs.
- ❖ Some protein-rich foods may also contain a lot of phosphorus, a mineral you may need to limit in your diet.
- ❖ Your dietitian will help you plan a diet with the right amount of protein for your good health and strength.

Sodium

Sodium is a mineral found naturally in foods. It is found in large amounts in table salt and in many foods. Eating too much sodium can make you thirsty and cause your body to retain too much fluid.

It may take time to adjust to the flavors of food without added salt, but in time, you will adjust to these new flavors and learn to add just the right herbs and spices to make your food taste good.



Please avoid foods high in sodium such as:

- ❖ Most canned foods and some frozen dinners
- ❖ Processed meats like hot dogs, bacon & cold cuts
- ❖ Canned and dry soup mixes, canned vegetables
- ❖ Condiments such as BBQ sauce, soy sauce, mustard, relish, ketchup, onion salt, garlic salt, seasoning salt.

Potassium

Potassium is another important mineral found in food. It makes your muscles and heart work properly. It is likely that you will need to limit the amount of high-potassium foods you eat each day.



Large amounts of potassium are found in foods such as:

- ❖ Bananas, cantaloupe or honeydew melon, oranges
- ❖ All dried fruits such as apricots, dates, prunes, raisins
- ❖ Potatoes, tomatoes, winter or acorn squash, spinach
- ❖ Juices like orange, prune, tomato and vegetable.
- ❖ Milk, cheese and yogurt
- ❖ Most salt substitutes (check with your doctor or dietitian before using)
- ❖ Chocolate, coffee, nuts, dried beans, split peas
- ❖ Bran cereal, whole wheat foods

Phosphorus

Eating foods high in phosphorus will raise the phosphorus level in your blood and over time, weaken your bones. It is important to limit the amount of high phosphorus foods in your diet. Phosphorus is a mineral that is found in large amounts in foods such as:



- ❖ Dairy products such as milk, cheese, yogurt, ice cream
- ❖ Nuts and peanut butter
- ❖ Dried beans and peas such as kidney beans, split peas and lentils
- ❖ Beverages such as cocoa, beer and dark cola drinks

Liquids

Drinking too many liquids may cause you to become short of breath, have swelling in your legs or have high blood pressure. Your dietitian will help you learn what is the right amount of liquids for you to drink each day.



Liquids (fluids) are foods or beverages that are liquid at room temperature, such as:

- ❖ Coffee, tea
- ❖ Sodas, Sport drinks, juice, lemonade, beer, wine
- ❖ Ice, popsicles, sherbet, ice cream and gelatin
- ❖ Soup and broth
- ❖ Water, ice cubes

To keep track of all of the liquid that you drink each day, use a measuring cup to find out the amount of liquid that your favorite glass and mug holds. Until you get used to measuring, keep track of the amount of liquid you drink each day on a sheet of paper or notebook.

Please be sure to ask your dietitian:

- ❖ If you have any questions
- ❖ If you need help with meal planning
- ❖ If you need grocery shopping tips, cooking ideas or suggestions for eating out.

Remember, following a special diet for your kidneys can be enjoyable and healthy for you.



Source: Department of Veterans Affairs
Nutrition and Food Service